

*The Ass; or, The Serpent.*

A LITERARY

# COMPARISON

Between the TRIBES of

*Issachar and Dan,*

In their Regard for

# CIVIL LIBERTY

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By THOMAS BRADBURY.

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*The Fifth Edition.*

JOB xxxi. 34. *Did I fear a great Multitude, or did the Contempt of Familiars terrifie me, that I kept silence, — went not out of the Door?*

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G E N. xlix. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.

*Issachar is a strong Ass couching down between two Burdens.*

*And he saw that Rest was good, and the Land that it was pleasant; and bowed his Shoulder to bear, and became a Servant unto Tribute.*

*Dan shall judge his People, as one of the Tribes of Israel.*

*Dan shall be a Serpent by the Way, an Adder in the Path; that biteth the Horse's heels, so that his Rider shall fall backward.*

*I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord.*

**T**HESE Words are Part of the Prophecy that Jacob dealt among his Sons when the Days drew near that he must die; and they let us see with what Variety of Temper those People acted, who all grew from the same Father: A full Argument how well the Distinction is form'd, That *all are not Israel, who are of Israel*: Neither because they are the Seed of Abraham, are they all Children: He here opens out what shall befall 'em in the latter Days, and how they would carry it when they came into the promised Land; and, because some of 'em should have little or no Taste of Liberty, and others would pursue it through all the Expence and Danger that lay in their way, he places these Two together, that every one who reads may do Justice upon the plain Opposition there is between 'em.

I shall consider the Words, First, As they describe a People that are Sluggish and Cowardly, who will venture nothing to save All,

whose Souls are beneath knowing the Distinction of Bondage and Freedom: And on the other hand, as they give us the Character of those who admire their Liberties, and will dare to seek and fetch 'em where-ever they're carried; who reckon this a Property that should not be lost as long as it can be kept, and will scarce submit to an Existence under Tyranny.

In these two Branches you have the Division of the Text; Here's a Tribe of *Israel* that gives us an Example of each Temper: *Issachar* is remembred for his Neglect of that which *Dan* was resolved upon no Terms to part with: And by observing what good old *Jacob* saith of these Two that were so unlike one another, we may fix the Characters that are due to those who either despise or value the Deliverance of this Day.

I. I shall begin with the Account that you have of *Issachar*, whose Passive Obedience (if you'll call it so) is condemn'd to Memory by these Words; *Issachar is a strong Ass couching down between two Burdens*; *And he saw that Rest was good, and the Land that it was pleasant, and bowed his Shoulder to bear, and became a Servant to Tribute*: Where you have three Things.

1. The general Temper of this People.
2. The Subjection and Bondage they fell into. And,
3. The Reason they gave for this Stupidity.

*Ver. 9, 21,  
22, 27.*

(1.) Y O U may observe, that many of the Tribes have their History couch'd in a Resemblance that's given of 'em: They are compar'd to some Creature of that very Disposition that should obtain among 'em: Thus *Judah is a Lyon's Whelp*; *Naphthali a Hind let loose*; *Joseph a fruitful Bough*; and *Benjamin a ravening Wolf*. Now these Allusions would convey to us such thoughts of the People as bear up to the Account we have of 'em afterwards: They are most of 'em to be understood as a Reputation; but what is said of *Issachar*, is as full of Contempt as a Metaphor can be: We are to know him by his Likeness to the most



most heavy and stupid Animal in the Creation. Instead of having his Name from something vigorous and beautiful, his Father leaves this upon him, That he's a strong *Ass* couching down between two Burdens. The Ground of the Similitude you see is the little Relish they should have for their Liberties, the sorry and dull Surrender they would make of themselves to Tyranny; which is a Temper expos'd in this Comparison two ways:

1. It's imputed to nothing else but the Stupidity of them that submit to it; the Tribe that sinks into those Measures is resembled by an *Ass*.

2. It's condemned by the Insinuation that it was in their Power to have it otherways; *Issachar is a strong Ass*: That very Strength that makes him couch under a Load, would be sufficient to throw it off.

1. W H A T the Comparison leads me first to tell you is, that the Foundation of all Passive Obedience is laid in Stupidity. They that couch down between two Burdens, who bow their Shoulders to bear, and become Servants to Tribute, may here see what Herd they belong to.

Tho' an *Ass* was more used in those Eastern Countries than it is with us, yet the Old Testamenc hath accounted of it as so mean a Creature, that the Comparison is very just: It seems to be made for no higher a Design than Drudgery, bearing of Burdens, no way remarkable either for its Head or its Heels, so little capable of being taught, that the Folly of our Nature is signified by it, that Man is born as a wild *Ass's Colt*: And tho' it's true in those Parts, we find the greatest Men riding on them, yet it's a Creature that the Ceremonial Law hath braided in a very peculiar way: It must, upon no Terms whatsoever, be thrown among the Offerings of the Lord: The Command was very general, *Thou shalt set apart Exod.xiii. unto the Lord all that opens the Matrix, and every First. 12, 13.ling that comes of the Beast which thou hast, the Males shall be the Lord's.* This Law was laid out in that compass, to put 'em often in mind of the Messias, who should be the First-born of every Creature; yet to this

there's one Exception, and the only Animal left out is, every *Firſtling* of an *Ass* thou ſhall redeem with a *Lamb*; and if thou wilt not redeem it, thou ſhalt break its Neck.

So that when Jacob speaks of *Issachar* under This Comparison, 'tis a viler Name than he could poſſibly leave him by Another; and it may intimate to us, not only the Stupidity of their Nature that run into this Crime, but a particular Unfitness for the Service of God. They ſeem to be the Outcast of both Worlds; they give up all that's dear to 'em in this, and ſhew a Dulness that can have no room in the other. The way Luk. i. 74, of ſerving God is without Fear, being delivered from the 75, Wrath of Enemies, in Holiness and Righteousneſſ all our Rev. xxi. days. The fearful and unbelieveing are in the front of 8. those Sinners who fill the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone. You may always obſerve it, that an indifference to Civil Liberties goes along with a neglect of that which is Religious: A Man that throws away the Blessings of Providence, cannot have a due Reliſh to those of Grace.

Though ſubmitting to the impious Will of a Monarch hath been exalted as if it was the one thing needful, yet it's easy to prove, both by the Rule of Scripture, and the Histories of Men, this is ſo far from containing the Whole of Religion, that it really poſſeffeth no one Part of it: There can be no Faith in it, for that would both purifie the Heart and conquer the World. It was this that made Moses forſake Egypt, not fearing the Wrath of the King. And there can be no Love, I mean to God or his People, for that would teach us to value what the One gives and the Other enjoys: And tho' this may be call'd Patience, yet it's a proſtitution of the Name to a Temper which hath none of the Thing; for this Grace ſhews it ſelf in Bearing a Burden, not in Laying it on. The over-ruling Hand of God we muſt submit to, but this will conſift with all the Zeal we can uſe againſt the Tools he employs. The Diſtinction is a good one, and as old as David, who knew how diſſerent his Behaviour ought to be: If the Lord hath firſt beeſt up againſt me, ſaith he to Saul, let him accept

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*an Offering, I have deserved it from him, and cannot answer him one of a Thousand; but if they be the Children of Men, cursed be they before the Lord.* 1 Sam. xxvi. 19.

'Tis plain that People lose their Christianity with their Liberties; and when once an encroaching Power hath made 'em Slaves, there needs little more to make 'em Heathens. The Ministers that preach up This Doctrine, will soon understand no other: It shall drive Faith, Repentance and Holiness out of the Pulpit, and instead of feeding the Children with Bread, they'll give 'em a Stone: In a little while we shall hear nothing else, but Obedience to the Lust of Men, as if Christ had no other Errand in laying down His Life, than to make the Kings of the Earth a compliment of Ours; that as he was a Servant of Rulers, we must be so too; as if no Sin could be dangerous but what they call Rebellion, and the Terms of procuring to our selves Damnation were never to be used but in one case, which is resisting of a Civil Power. We shall seldom hear a better Application of that awful Argument; 'tis not so warmly pleaded to make us flee from the Wrath to come, that being warned of God concerning things not seen as yet, we may be moved with Fear: They'll but seldom trouble their Heads about the Danger of Debauchery, that Whoremongers and Adulterers God will judge: They'll tell us but little of the Hazard such are in, who are lovers of Pleasure more than lovers of God, who blaspheme the whole Scheme of Religion, and use that Book to make them laugh, which makes the Devils tremble; who rush into the Retirements of our Worship, the Ordinances that ought to be kept clean and holy; I say, we hear little of their Danger, tho' the Scripture hath given us the same dreadful Word in that case which agrees so well with them in the other: *They that eat and drink unworthily, eat and drink to themselves Damnation.* These are the Encroachments that Slavery will make upon our Religion.

1 Cor. xi.  
29.

But we have not so learned Christ. The Apostles that went about with the Gospel, were often claiming the Privileges of the Law. For this did Paul argue

gue with the *Centurion* on the Stairs of the Castle, and would not let the Christian run away with the Roman : For this did he threaten to shake the Government of *Philippi*, and refuse to take his Liberty at that easy rate, of going out of the Prison ; No, he was resolved to let those Magistrates know, that as the Laws of the Empire had given him a Protection, so he would never lose it for want of Zeal ; and tho' the Jaylor, who was but converted the Night before, brought him the Message, *they have sent to let you go, now then depart in peace* ; yet he useth the Advantage that Innocence gave him over Tyranny, *they have*

*beaten us openly, and uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into Prison, and now do they thrust us out pri-*  
*vily, nay verily but let 'em come themselves and fetch us out.* So tender was he of his Privileges, that tho' he knew as much as any Man how to despise the Pomp of the World, yet in this case he'll insist upon a Ceremony that perhaps was never demanded before ; that the Magistrates of the Town should come to the Prison-door and beg Pardon, and bring them Out whom through a Mistake they had put In, and desire them to *depart from their City.* For this did he refuse to answer the Summons of *Festus*, who would have betray'd him to his Enemies, but *appeal'd to Cesar* ; and from this Principle did he deal so roundly with *Ananias*, *God shall smite thee thou whited Wall, for sittest thou there to judge me according to the Law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the Law?*

Ch. xxiii.  
3. This is the Spirit of our Religion, it allows none of the Stupidity that *Issachar* was run down into ; for an *Ass* can no more be a *Pattern* under the Gospel, than it could be a *Sacrifice* under the Law. But it's enough we are told what sort of Creatures they are, by the Metaphor in my Text ; despicable to Men, and rejected by God ; made for Service and Contempt. The Comparison gives us the lowest Opinion of those to whom it belongs. They are by this represented as a stupid servile People, for the Word fits their Heads as well as their Shoulders.

2. THE Crime of their becoming Servants to Tribute, is hinted at by the further Account we have of 'em, that they lay under no necessity of doing it: They had it in their Power to be otherwise, and might have compell'd a better Lot for themselves and their Posterity. Had they been drain'd, and weaken'd, and sunk down to an Inability, that which was now both their Sin and Punishment, had been only the latter. But *Issachar* was a strong *Ass*, able to Refuse a Load as well as to Bear it.

Several Annotators give us this Note from the Hebrew Word, that he was an *Ass of Bone*; which perhaps is a further Contempt of him, to tell us his want of Spirit, as if he was only Outside, a meer Shell and Frame of Nature: And indeed they who so tamely give up all that can be dear, show but little Soul in that Surrender. But I shall take the Words in the first Sense I gave you of 'em, that he is call'd a *strong Ass*; to signify, that he had Capacity to have done otherways, only he wanted Heart and Courage to use it. He that couch'd down between Two Burdens, might easily have protested against One; he that bowed his Shoulder to bear, could have cloath'd it with Armour: And the Wealth with which he paid his Tribute as a *Servant*, might have led him into the Field as a Rival.

All the Instances that we have in Scripture of Submission to an unrighteous Power, represent the People as not able to do otherways. We never once find a good Man neglecting to resist an Injustice when he could do it. Moses indeed fled from Pharaoh, because he had no prospect of conquering him; but when he had to do only with a single Egyptian, who was smiting one of his Brethren, he's no longer about it than whilst he looks this way and that way, and then he kills him, and hideth him in the Sand: And this is so far from having the Censure, that a Slave would give it, that upon That Action he was in hopes to have raised his Publick Character, and by this Justice upon the Officer, thought to have led on that of the People upon the King, as the Martyr Stephen tells us; for he brings in this as the Reason why, seeing one of  
the

Exod. ii.  
11, 12.

Act. vii. the Jews suffer wrong, he avenged him that was oppressed,  
 24, 25: and smote the Egyptian, because he supposed his Brethren  
 would have understood, how that by his hand God would  
 have delivered them, but they understood not. If their  
 Zeal would have come on as fast as his would have  
 led it, they would have been saved then; but they  
 lost 40 Years by their Unbelief. David run away  
 from Saul, when he had no Friend to stand by him,  
 but he put himself at the Head of a little Army  
 as soon as he could; and the only Reason why  
 he did not give him Battle was, because he had not  
 Force enough: but when those great Numbers came  
 to him every Day, he makes no scruple to go out into  
 the Field, for there fell some of Manasseh to David  
 when he came with the Philistines against Saul to  
 Battle.

✓ Chron.  
xii. 19.

A just and holy God may indeed deliver us over  
 to the Will of evil Men; but to say, that he would  
 have us deliver up our selves, is to blaspheme his Em-  
 pire; for he hath no Fellowship with the Thrones of In-  
 quity, who frame Mischief by a Law.

Psal. xciv. That which  
 20. held Zion in Captivity, was God's making her  
 Strength to fail; He had delivered her into their

Lam.i.14: Hands against whom she was not able to rise up: But  
 when she had more Strength, there's a new Exhort-

Ha. iii. 1. ation to use it; Shake thy self from the Dust, O  
 Jerusalem; loose thy self from the Bands of thy Neck,  
 O thou Captive Daughter of Zion.

In these two things you have the woful Temper  
 of this People; They were stupid, and not to be  
 imprest by a generous Argument; and tho' it's true,  
 they had Strength and Capacity, yet it was all  
 thrown away upon a lazy Nature, that would not  
 use it. Issachar is a strong Ass touching down between  
 two Burdens.

(2.) WE have the folly of their Behaviour, and are  
 told, how soon they part with their Liberties. And  
 here you meet with Bondage in every Form and  
 Shape. Here's Oppression in all its Weight, he falls  
 between two Burdens. Here's a Slavery to his Per-  
 son, his Shoulder is brought to bear what they lay upon  
 him.

him. Here's Poverty in his Concerns, he becomes a Servant to Tribute ; and here's a Necessity for him to be Active in all this. Oppression stu-  
pifies the Faculties, *he coucheib down beneath his Burdens*, he bows his Shoulder, he consents to be a Servant : What a Gulph of Perdition was this People sunk into ? Whither will Tyranny lead those who have the Heart to follow it ? Can we ever begin to stop too soon, when it will be so dreadful to have it too late ?

I. Y O U observe here what weight this Op-  
pression was laid on with : 'Twas not what Rehoboam threatned, the Heaviness of a little Fin-  
ger ; but *he couches down between two Burdens*.

Some translate this between two Hills ; and understand it of the Situation that Issachar had in the Land of Canaan : Others suppose that it refers to the Quarrels they might have with those Two Tribes that lay on each Side of 'em ; but the Words seem to tell us what a Load of Misery they had brought themselves under.

T Y R A N T S, who know no Justice, will allow no Mercy ; they never think their Grandeur advanc'd high enough ; they'll set no bounds to the Lust of Empire, but let it rove in all the License of their own Fancy. Do not imagine that there's any dealing with an Arbitrary Government. Laws are only Shackles upon you, but no Rule to ~~them~~. Some remove Land-Marks, Job xxiv. they violently take away Flocks and feed thereon, 2, 3, &c. they turn the Needy out of the way, the Poor of the Earth hide themselves together : Behold as the wild Asses of the Desert they go forth to Work, rising betimes for a Prey, and it's the tame Asses of the Villages that fall into their Hands. They cause the Naked to go without clothing, he hath no covering in the Cold ; they pluck the Fatherless from the Breast, and take a Pledge of the Poor ; they take away the Sheaf from the Hungry : Men groan out of the City, and the Soul of the Wounded cries out.

If you would not couch down between Two Burdens, you must enter an effectual Protest against One : For they that submit, will, in a little Time, be brought to that pass ; *Her Carriages were heavy loaden, they are a Burden to the weary Beast, they stoop, they bow down together, they could not deliver their Burden, but themselves are gone into Captivity.* Thus did the Ammonites with the Men of Jabesh Gilead ; tho' the poor People would have submitted themselves unto 'em, yet they will allow of no easier Terms than thrusting out the right Eye, and laying it as a Reproach upon all Israel. So unlimited did Ben-hadad take himself, in the Court of a Man, who had gone too far, in saying, *My Lord, O King, I am thine, and all that I have : He does not only claim his Silver and Gold, but his Wives and Children ; and would send his Servants the next Day to take out what was pleasant in their Eyes.*

This made David rather chuse to fall into the Hands of God, than into those of Man : Not but that the former could have destroy'd him with more Expedition than the latter ; but *with the Lord there was Mercy, with Men there is none.* And indeed the Process hath been very short ; When once a Tyrant hath said your Laws were his, He hath soon come to affirm your Lives were so too. And therefore it's the same thing, be-

*ving done* his Vassals, and being his Cattle. All that you have pertaining to Life and Godliness, is thrown in as a Morsel to Caesar : They take up all of them with the Angle, they catch them with their Net, and gather them in their Drag, therefore they rejoice and are glad ; They will empty continually, and not spare to slay the Nations. And how unhappy must the Case of a People be, who never know when they have done suffering ? Such a Government upon Earth resembles one of the worst Ideas that we have of Hell, where there is no Sacrifice for Sin, but a certain fearful

fearful looking for of more Judgment and new Indignation.

2. THEIR Persons were made vile and contemptible, they bow their Shoulders to bear. There are some Usages which God always reckon'd an Indignity to Human Nature. 'Tis for this reason that he limited the Number of Stripes that were to be given to a Malefactor, *lest thy Brother seeme vile to thee*: And the Statute of Murder is laid out upon this ground, That *in the Image of God made he Man*. Such an Oppression did the Jews live under in Egypt; their Burdens were very grievous in the Bricklins, the Task-masters oblig'd them to their whole Quantity of Work tho' they denied them Straw, and then punisht 'em for not doing what they knew to be impossible.

When this comes to be the Lot of such as give up their Liberties, the Justice of God calls for our Adoration; they that have *lived in Pleasure and Vanity*, are most likely to make a Sale of all that they have; they have *eaten the Bread of Idleness*, and, How righteous is it with Heaven to give 'em that of Sorrow? That they who are brought up in Scarlet, should embrace Dunghills? This is one Consequence of Slavery; and it fell heavily upon the Priests at Jerusalem, who might remember their Sin in their Punishment: They that used to lead the Blind, came to wander as blind Men in the Streets, and so polluted with Blood, that Men could not touch their Garments: The Anger of the Lord divided 'em, and he would no more regard 'em. An Absolute Government Swallows as fast as you can Give, and, What will this come to in time? But the hanging up of Princes by the Hand, not honouring the Faces of the Elders, taking the young Men to Grind, and making the Children fall under the Wood.

Lam. iv.

14.

v. 12,

13.

3. It runs out into Poverty. This *paying of Tribute*, must be understood of excessive Taxes ; Impositions that are enough to drain a Country : Not what a People consent to for their own Defence, but what are extorted from them. And then what signifies the Goodness of the Land, when the Profits are offer'd up as a Sacrifice to the Luxury of a Stranger ? Thus hath *a fruitful Land been brought into Barrenness*. *The Houses of the People were made a Dunghill* ; and they that have liv'd in the midst of Plenty, *sought their Bread to relieve their Souls*. They consent to the lowest Terms meerly to enjoy what Nature had made their own : *We have given the Hand to the Assyrian to be satisfied*

*Lam.v.6. with Bread ; and, better are they that perish by the Sword, than such as are stricken through for want of the Fruits of the Field* : It was a dreadful Article in their Judgment, *thine Enemy shall distress thee in all thy Gates*.

Deut.  
xxviii:

4. That which makes the Case deplorable to the last degree, is, that the People themselves concur in it, either through a Necessity, or the Habit of Bondage. *They bow their own Shoulder to bear* ; and, by an unaccountable mixture of Choice and Force, *become Servants to Tribute*. When a Nation hath given up their Liberties, they do not only lose the Thing, but all the Taste they us'd to have of it.

And this may be consider'd both as a growing Vice, and a Stupidity that the righteous God hath sealed 'em up under. The Misery of such a Case hath this in it, that the People are never likely to remember from whence they are fallen, or do their first Works ; they sleep a perpetual sleep, and do not awake. 'Tis not a Damage that sets them a Thinking, or warms a powerful Zeal to recover what they have lost ; but by a long course of Subjection it becomes their own Act.

(3.) I'll

(3.) I'll enquire into the Reasons they give for this Neglect of 'emselves, or what it is they get in exchange for their Liberties; and you find there are two things that leave 'em under the power of this Infatuation.

1. What they reckon the Favour of the Enemy,  
*They saw that Rest was good.*

2. The natural Advantages of their Country,  
*The Land it was pleasant.*

1. They see that Rest is good; which shews us how their Judgment is perverted, to suppose that there can be any such thing as Rest, while the Yoke of Tyranny hangs upon their Shoulders. Now, this Opinion hath its only Root in Cowardise and Laziness. They dread the noble Toil of War, tho' the Hazards People run that way, are far from being equal to those of a flavish Temper; you can scarce lose so much by venturing, as you give away by submitting. Whilst the Jews resisted Sennacherib, they had what we call a Chance for it; but he tells them roundly, If they made an Agreement with him by Presents, it must end in his taking 'em away from their own Land. And is this the Rest wherewith they would cause the weary to lie down? Is this all that a People get by throwing themselves upon the Mercy of a Tyrant? We may well say, Arise and depart, this is not your Rest, because it's polluted.

Mic.ii.10;

2. The Benefits of their Country was another thing that soften'd 'em into this Compliance, *They saw that the Land was pleasant.* They'd no mind to be carried off, because here was enough for their own Necessity, and for the Humour of him to whom they paid Tribute. But what a poor Argument is this? If the Place was so good, it deserved to be fought for; If the Produce of Nature there was so great, 'tis pity that they should have All of the Profit who had None of the Pains. Thus they pleaded upon their Return out of Captivity, *the Land that thou hast given to our Fathers,*

to

Neh. ix. 36, 37. to eat the Fruit thereof, and the Good thereof, behold we are Servants in it ; and it yields much Increase to the Kings whom thou hast set over us, because of our Sins ; also they have dominion over our Bodies, and over our Cattle at their pleasure, and we are in great Distress.

Thus have I laid out to you the former of these Characters, and shown you how poor a Figure Issachar made in the World. But,

II. We have an Account of better things in the Blessing that he pronounceth upon another Tribe. *Dan shall judge his People like one of the Tribes of Israel ; Dan shall be a Serpent by the Way, and an Adder in the Path, that bites his Horse's Heels, so that his Rider falls backward ; I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord.*

What is said of this brave People, is so plain a Reverse to the Meanness of the other, that a very little Enlargement will serve here.

1. He begins with a new sort of Language to give us the Description of these. What they did would be worthy the Name they derived from their Father ; *Dan shall judge his People like one of the Tribes of Israel.*

2. We have the Measures that he will take in order to it ; and that is, the Use both of his Policy and Courage : He is like a *Serpent by the Way, and an Alder in the Path*, and, rather than not be trampled on, he'll bite the *Horses Heels* ; he'll undermine the Foundations of Tyranny, so that the *Rider shall fall backward.*

3. These noble Designs are what *Jacob recommends to the Blessing of God, in that Prophe-tick Rapture, I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord.*

(1.) We have a general Honour put upon them. *Dan shall judge his People like one of the Tribes of Israel.* What judging of his People means I had

had occasion to show you the last Year, That it includes an Execution of their Laws, and a Defending of their Liberties from any that would oppress them. And this we find that Sampson did, who was of that Tribe, and paid less regard to an Enemy, in whose Country he lived, than any of the Judges. Now, do but consider how this is plac'd in a full Opposition to what was said of Issachar; and from thence you may collect, That those Rulers do not judge their People, who persuade them to bow down under two Burdens: These are inconsistent with one another.

But what I would observe to you, is, the honourable Turn he gives this, That it's doing like One of the Tribes of Israel: As if they that neglect it were sunk below the Name. But Dan kept up the Dignity of his Family, and shew'd that his Descent from so many Patriarchs was not in vain. Those antient Worthies, whom God had call'd out from the rest of the World, led him the way to it. One of the most remarkable Things that Abraham did in a publick Manner, was the taking of Five Kings Captive; tho' the People, in whose Quarrel he mingled himself, are <sup>Gen. xiii. 1, 2.</sup> the first Rebels we read of: He had Armour ready for three Hundred and eighteen Men, train'd up in his House. Upon his return from this Slaughter, Melchisedek, the Priest of the most High God, meets him, and gives him a solemn Blessing in His Name, who is the Possessor of Heaven and Earth. And tho' it's true, he refus'd to be made rich by the Spoils, yet the Right that he had to bring down and plunder so many Tyrants, appears from his paying Tythes to Melchisedek; for we cannot think that he would have brought Robbery for a Burnt-Offering. Jacob recover'd a Part of the Land with his Sword, and his Bow, out of the Hand of the Amorites; nay, he had the Name of Israel given him in the Field of Battle, because by his Strength he laid hold of the Angel, <sup>and</sup>

and had Power both with God, and Man, and prevailed : So that Cowardice, in any of his Post-  
rity, was a departure from that noble Spirit  
their Fathers had been Eminent for.

And especially, if you'll consider 'em as a People set apart to the Worship of God, they were bound to run all Hazards in defending what he gave 'em. When they were frighted with the *Anakims*, faint-hearted, and durst not go on, it was acting so far below themselves, that he will scarce own 'em to be his People ; but says, That it's a *Generation that do err in their Hearts, they knew not his Ways.* Their Spirits had a wrong Turn, and he twore, *That they shall never enter into his rest* ; And if they should allow an Enemy to break in upon the Land of their Possession, it was dishonourable to their Name : But *Dan* bears up the old Figure, and in *judging of his People, is like one of the Tribes of Israel.*

(2.) Here are the Ways that he takes to do it. Where you may observe,

1. The Policy and Wisdom of this People : They are compar'd to *Serpents and Adders.*

2. Their Courage, or the Hazard they run : They'll throw themselves into the *Path*, venture being crush'd, rather than lose their End.

3. Their Resolution to have the Blessing whatever it cost 'em : If they can't dismount a Tyrant by mere Force, they'll bite his *Horse's Heels, so that the Rider shall fall backward.*

1. They are represented as a wise and well-instructed People ; a *Serpent in the Way, an Adder in the Path.* Doubtless *Issachar* thought it a good *Prudential* to humble themselves, and hold their Lives upon no other Tenure than the Will of a Prince ; but this their Way was their Folly. *Dan* takes his Maxims as they rise from the plain Welfare of the Community : He'll neither be

be hector'd nor wheedled out of his Privileges ; he'll lose 'em neither by War nor Treaty : As he's Serpent enough to understand what's best for him ; so, like the Adder, he stops his Ears against the Voice of the Charmer, charming never so wisely.

The want of such a Spirit, is the Presage of Ruin. *Thou hast bid their Hearts from Understanding, therefore thou shalt not exalt them.* Job xvii. Christ 4. himself hath bid his People take to 'em the Wisdom of the Serpent ; tho' here I would not have you mistake this for the mere Wrigling of that Creature. Fraud and Artifice, lurking Ways, and Iying Words, are as much below the Wisdom that will save a Nation, as they are against the Honesty that must save a Soul. Those Men that came to David, and had understanding of the Times, and knew what Israel ought to do, found that the Wisdom of the Serpent was consistent with the Innocence of the Dove.

2. Besides a Capacity to contrive what is best, here's a Courage to execute it. This is a Tribe that Moses speaks well of in the Blessing that he gave 'em. *Dan is a Lyon's Whelp, and he shall leap from Bashan.* And we may observe a Character of that sort in the Verse before us, That he'll venture himself as a Serpent in the Way, as an Adder in the Path ; he'll run the Hazard of being trampled under foot, rather than take up with the poor and scanty Terms that an Enemy gives him. 'Tis better being crush'd at once, than condemn'd to a miserable Existence : And these are things that will deliver a People over to the Voice of Fame : The good Esteem and hearty Wishes of the World will be to such as offer themselves willingly, and jeopard their Lives in the high Places of the Field.

3. They are determined to have the Blessing at any Expence : Nor will they lose Things for want

want of meer Names and Forms ; they'll endeavour to bring down a Tyrant by his own Methods, if all the rest shall fail : And when he desigus to ride over Liberty and Religion, if they cannot stop his Career, they'll break his Neck ; the very *Horse's Heels*, which should have ruin'd Them, shall receive the Wound that will prove fatal to Him. And indeed when a People are thus inclin'd to *loose the Bands* of their Captivity, it's no very hard matter to humble the Wicked by the Measures they have taken. Violence and Iniquity do not so easily carry their Load, but, in a little time, their *Rider may fall backward.*

(3.) WHEN Jacob hath thus describ'd his Son by the brave Measures that he'll take, he recommends the whole Design to the Blessing of God ; *I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord.*

Some imagine that the good old Patriarch was, at this time, almost spent upon his Death-bed with going so far as he had done ; and in these Words he takes breath again : Others think there's in them the Horror of that Idolatry that he saw the Tribe of *Dan* would run into. But if you'll take 'em for a Pause, it's a Sign, that what he had said of a People getting back their Liberties, was of so much Value with him, that his Soul can rest a while upon it, before he proceeds to the other Blessings.

Or, you may understand it, as several would do, for a personal Wish, Q. D. " Let me turn aside for a Moment from telling what will happen to you, and spend one Thought upon my self. You hear what *Issachar* will give up, and *Dan* retrieve ; but these things belong to a World I am going from. There's something nearer me than your Prosperity ; *I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord.*" If you

you take it thus, it tells us, That for good Men to know that they who come after 'em will be zealous for God, and truly concern'd for the Publick Interest, is One Cordial in a dying Hour ; as *David* saith to *Solomon*, *I go the way* 1 Kings ii. *of all the Earth ; but be thou strong, and shew thy* 2. *self a Man.*

But I see no reason why the Salvation that he waited for, may not be connected to the ways that *Dan* would take in judging his People. And then it includes in it these three things.

1. His hearty Wishes to so good a Cause,  
Q. D. " This will be thy Temper, and my  
" Blessing go along with it. It's what I think of  
" with Pleasure, and in some of my last Breath  
" commit thee to the Favour of Heaven : The  
" God before whom my Fathers walk'd, the Angel  
" that redeem'd me from all Evil, establish the  
" Work of thine Hand."

And this we have had many Examples of ; tho' good People were just at the Gates of Glory, yet they could not take leave of those that stay'd behind, without a Testimony for the Cause they had been engaged in : Which ought to be of the greatest Value with us, that such a Number of excellent Persons have died Praying for the *Peace of our Jerusalem*. They have spoke well of the Liberties of Mankind, when themselves were leaving all Things of that sort ; and we cannot think that God would let 'em go out of the World, either with a Lye in their Mouths, or a Trifle in their Hearts.

2. When he adds, *I have waited for thy Salvation* ; it may be understood as a Direction to those brave People, to tell 'em, they must hope for Success in a religious Way. Second Causes are employ'd ; but the good old Man would let 'em know, That their *Salvation is of the Lord* ;

*Lord: And if they will conquer in earnest,  
they must be a People that wait for it,*

This comprehends the Duty that they owe to him, their Dependance upon his Care, their Jealousy for his Honour. The Profane, the Unclean, the Evil doers do not come into the Number. If they have any hopes of being deliver'd, 'tis from something else, for *God is not in all their Thoughts*. They that use his Name without Reverence, and his People without Pity, can't think that he hath any Pleasure in their Ways. But *Jacob* would have them give all their Counsels and Attempts a serious Tincture, for when the *high Praises of God* Psal. cxlix are in their Mouths, it will add a Weight to the two edged Sword that is in their Hands.

6.  
Luke ii.  
29, 30.  
Heb. xi.  
33, 34.  
Rev. xi.  
18.

3. This seems to be an Act of his Faith in the Great *Messiah*; for it's under this Name that another good old Man receiv'd him: *Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in peace, for mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation.* Nor could this be thought improper to mingle with the Zeal they had for Civil Liberties: It was by a *Faith* in him that the *Elders obtain'd a good Report, in subduing Kingdoms, working Righteousness, stopping the Mouths of Lions, waxing valiant in Fight, and turning to flight the Enemies of the Aliens.* The Believer hath in him the truest Courage. There's nothing in any one Doctrine of Christianity that will tye up the Hands of an injur'd People. One that hath *tasted that the Lord is gracious*, must have Pity to the Desolations of Mankind. He can't endure to see that Nature ruin'd by a Tyrant, that hath been honour'd by a Saviour.

And then, besides, as the Kingdom of a *Messiah* extends it self, it will proclaim *Liberty to the Captives*. It's an Institution, as well as a Prophecy, that there shall be *no hurting nor destroying in all his holy Mountain*; and he is then said to take to himself *his great Power and Reign, when he destroys them that destroy the Earth.*

And,

And, again, One that hath Faith in Jesus, is waiting for that time, when *Kings shall shut their Mouths at him; Princes shall see and arise,* and he'll strike through Monarchs in the Day of his Wrath, and wrinch his Glory out of their Hands, who have taken it from him.

Again, waiting for this Salvation, prepares a Man for the Day of Battle: A Christian does not fight upon those Hazards that others do, who lose two Lives at once, that which drops in the Field, and that which is eternal. The Believer in these Dangers takes himself to be *fighting the good Fight, and keeping the Faith;* and if his Course is at an end in this Attempt, it will be finish'd with Joy.

And thus have I set before you the two Tempters that distinguished these Tribes. Here's Death, and Life, and Curse, and Blessing: The Choice must now be your own Act. My Time hath suffer'd me to do little more than take the Words to pieces, and consider the Parts of 'em asunder; you'll easily apply what you have heard these two ways.

1. Into a full Resentment of those Doctrines that would perswade you out of your Liberties upon the same Terms that *Issachar* parted with Theirs. 'Tis pity that human Nature it self should be so far debased; but 'tis with an Aggravation that we see the Holy Name of Christ hath been blasphem'd; that those Mysteries must be our Choice, which was the *Romans* Abhorrence; as the Apostle saith in another case, it's *a Fornication not so much as nam'd among the Gentiles.* Do not take it for a small matter, for at this Gap do they throw in all the Superstitions of Worship, their *damnable Doctrines,* as well as their cruel Measures. 'Tis by this means they'll steal away your Religion, and fill the Nation with Darkness, and Blood.

2: This calls us up to the Praises of God, who deliver'd us from the Stupidity of *Issachar,* and inspir'd

spir'd us with the Temper of *Dan*, at our Revolution.

I'm sensible, this Mercy hath had all the Regards that the Children of *Israel* gave to the *Manna* which fell from Heaven. At first we gather'd it, we tasted it, liv'd upon it, and reckon'd it *Angels Food*; now 'tis but *light Bread*, and we want *Flesh to eat*; nay, as it is said of *Sodom*, we are going out after *strange Flesh*: And I doubt not but the Parallel would hold further, that it must come as soon out of *Our Nostrils* as it did out of *Theirs*. What they desir'd in their *Lust*, they enjoy'd with a *Plague*, for e'er it was chew'd, while it was yet between their *Teeth*, the *Wrath of God* fell upon 'em.

But I would recommend the great Things that He hath done for us, to your Value and Care; and this can be expressed in no better way, than by walking in the *Light*, while we have the *Light*; a *Conversation* that becomes the *Gospel*; an Abhorrence of any thing that would mingle with your Religion, or defile your Practice; a Pity to the poor Protestants in *France*, upon whom the *Clouds* have return'd after the *Rain*; a having no Fellowship with the unfruitful Works of *Darkness*. And, whoever they are that have no Compassion for Blood, no Reverence for Leagues, O my Soul! come not thou into their *Secret*, unto their *Assembly*, mine Honour be not thou united; for in their *Anger* they slew a *Man*, and in their *Self-will* they dig down a *Wall*: Let such *Counsel* of the *Wicked* be far from me, I have waited for thy *Salvation*, O Lord.

**FINIS;**



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*Publis'd by the same AUTHOR.*

**F**I V E Anniversary Sermons upon the Fifth of November, the Day of our Happy Revolution; for the Years 1700, 1701, 1702, 1703, and 1704.

The Welfare of *Israel*, consider'd: In Two Sermons on the Fifth of November, 1705. and 1706.

The Divine Right of the Revolution: In Two Sermons on the Fifth of November, 1707, and 1708.

Theocracy; or, The Government of the Judges, consider'd and apply'd to the Revolution, 1688. Preach'd Nov. 5. 1710.

Steadiness in Religion, recommended from the Example of *Daniel*, under the Decree of *Darius*: In a Sermon, March 23. 1711-12.

A Confession of Faith, at the Publick Ordination of *Thomas Bradbury*, London, July 10. 1707.

Readiness for Death, urg'd from our not knowing the Time of it: In a Sermon occasion'd by the Death of Mr. *Norwich Salisbury*, &c.

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